



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

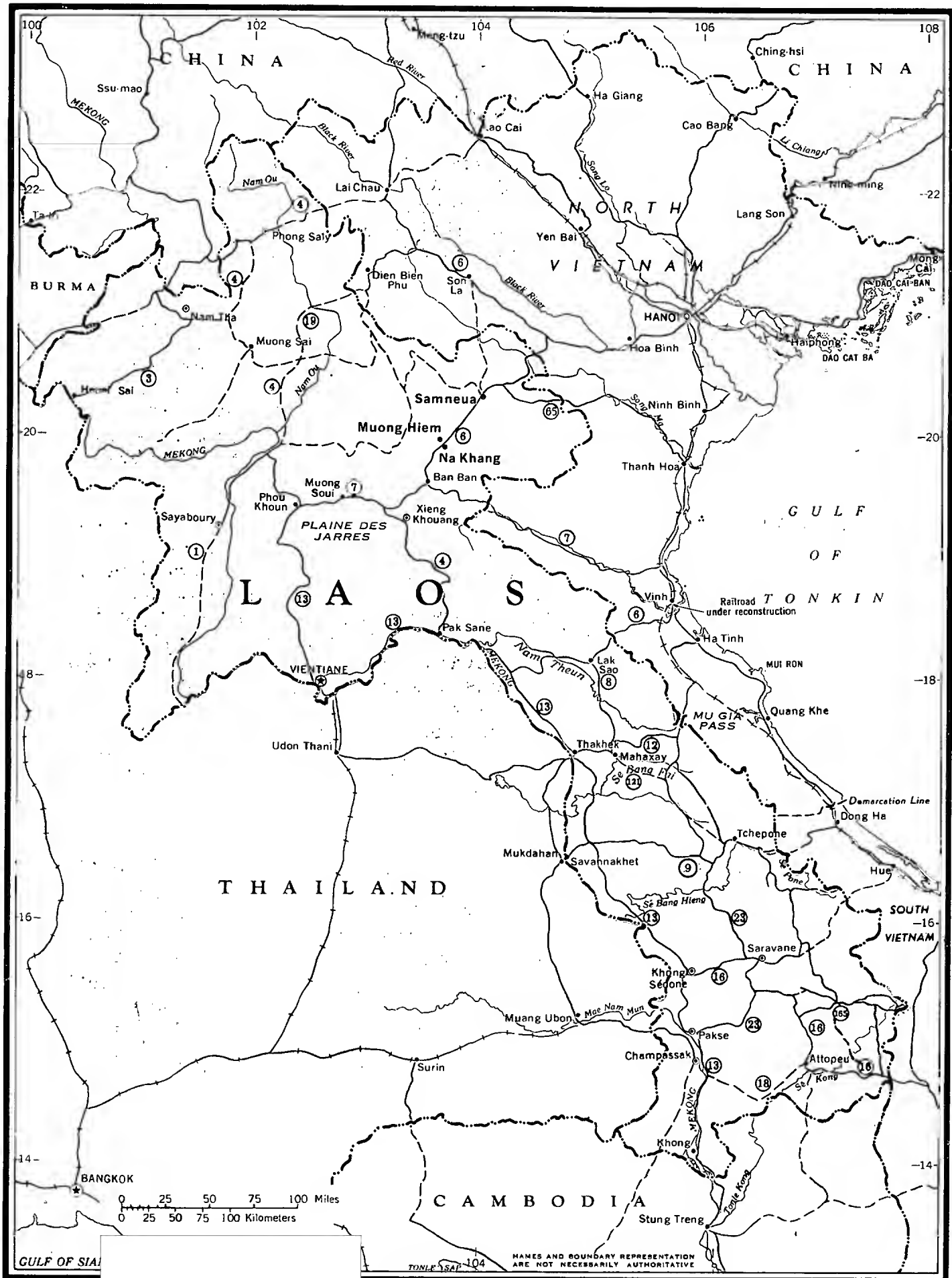


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19 FEBRUARY 1966

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1. Laos

An expected Communist push against Na Khang, a key base in northern Laos, may have begun.

Communist troops, including substantial numbers of North Vietnamese, struck in battalion strength against government defenses south of the base on Thursday, overrunning at least one position. Yesterday, government forces were aided by air strikes, but there is now some evidence that the base and its airstrip may have fallen. Loss of these installations would open the strategic Samneua area to further Communist penetration.

2. North Vietnam

Hanoi may soon face another difficult decision in its relations with Moscow and Peking. Given the increasing violence of the Sino-Soviet polemics during the past month, Peking may well refuse to send a delegation to next month's Soviet party congress, where the contentious issues are likely to come under review.

If Peking boycotts the congress, Hanoi will be under pressure to follow suit, thus violating its promise to Shelepin last month.

3. South Vietnam

Prime Minister Ky is moving to publicize the Honolulu Declaration through a series of rallies in various parts of the country. The four corps commanders are organizing the rallies, which reportedly are to run throughout next week.

The first rally took place last night in a provincial capital some 150 miles north of Saigon. It seems to have attracted some 5,000 participants.

4. Dominican Republic

Garcia Godoy yesterday dismissed over 80 municipal officials throughout the country and fired two of the 26 provincial governors. He claimed privately that almost all of those replaced are Bosch partisans.

If this is true, it will go far toward reducing the ability of pro-Bosch forces to influence the June elections. Ex-president Balaguer, expected to be a leading presidential contender, has long complained that the President's appointment of many Bosch partisans to local posts early in his regime had stacked the cards in Bosch's favor.

There has been no apparent movement during the past 24 hours in ending the standoff between Garcia Godoy and the military.

5. Algeria

President Boumediene, in power now for eight months, has made little headway against Algeria's monumental administrative and economic problems.

Although he has desisted from Ben Bella's foreign adventurism, factionalism within his Revolutionary Council and incompetence in many ministries have thwarted his determination to improve things on the home front.

Dissatisfaction is increasing throughout Algeria, but probably no one but another army officer could overthrow Boumediene. There are persistent rumors that the chief of staff is gaining influence in the Council and placing followers in key positions in the army.

6. Italy

Premier-designate Moro is apparently ready to present a new cabinet list to President Saragat, possibly today. They [redacted] agreed, reluctantly, on the reappointment of Fanfani as foreign minister. Parliamentary debate and approval of a new government is likely to take several more weeks.

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7. Great Britain

[redacted] Prime Minister Wilson's talks with Kosygin in Moscow, which begin on Monday, will center on Vietnam and disarmament. The Foreign Office does not expect anything new to come from the Russians on Vietnam.

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8. India

[redacted] Communists are behind the food riots which erupted in the Calcutta area on Wednesday.

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One death and many injuries and arrests have already resulted. Leftist organizations are calling for a general strike by Calcutta students. Since the government appears determined to meet the situation by using police rather than enlarging the food ration, more trouble may arise.

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